

What is claimed is:

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1. An inter-device cooperative control method wherein each of a plurality of devices having a communication function communicates with another device, said inter-device cooperative control method comprising the steps of:

providing each of said plurality of devices with functional information including at least one of information on a function possessed by a device and information on a function to be performed on the device, environmental information on the environment in which the device is located, and status information which indicates the progress of at least one of a process performed by the device and a process performed on the device;

obtaining information on a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or information on a process to be performed on said plurality of devices, this information obtaining step being performed by an arbitrary one of said plurality of devices; and

determining a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or a process to be performed on said plurality of devices based on said obtained information and said functional information, said environmental information, and said status information, this process determining step

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being performed by said arbitrary device.

2. The inter-device cooperative control method as claimed in claim 1, wherein pieces of information obtained by said arbitrary device are functional information, environmental information, and status information on said plurality of devices.

3. The inter-device cooperative control method as claimed in claim 1, wherein information obtained by said arbitrary device is a request for a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or a process to be performed on said plurality of devices.

4. The inter-device cooperative control method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said environmental information includes position information indicating a position of a device.

5. The inter-device cooperative control method as claimed in claim 4, wherein said position information includes at least one of an absolute position of the device, a relative position of the device to another device, and a distance obtained based on a route which can be used by the device.

6. The inter-device cooperative control method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said plurality of devices operate to perform a predetermined process, said predetermined process including changing of conditions of

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said operation.

7 An inter-device cooperative control system composed of a plurality of devices having a communication function, each of said plurality of devices communicating with another device, said inter-device cooperative control system comprising:

storage means for storing functional information including at least one of information on a function possessed by a device and information on a function to be performed on the device, environmental information on the environment in which the device is located, and status information which indicates the progress of at least one of a process performed by the device and a process performed on the device, said storage means being owned by each of said plurality of devices;

means for obtaining information on a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or information on a process to be performed on said plurality of devices, said obtaining of information being performed by an arbitrary one of said plurality of devices; and

means for determining a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or a process to be performed on said plurality of devices based on information obtained by said arbitrary device and functional information, environmental information, and status information each

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possessed by said arbitrary device.

8. The inter-device cooperative control system as claimed in claim 7, wherein pieces of information obtained by said arbitrary device are functional information, environmental information, and status information on said plurality of devices.

9. The inter-device cooperative control system as claimed in claim 7, wherein information obtained by said arbitrary device is a request for a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or a process to be performed on said plurality of devices.

10. The inter-device cooperative control system as claimed in claim 7, wherein said environmental information includes position information indicating a position of a device.

11. The inter-device cooperative control system as claimed in claim 10, wherein said position information includes at least one of an absolute position of the device, a relative position of the device to another device, and a distance obtained based on a route which can be used by the device.

12. The inter-device cooperative control system as claimed in claim 7, wherein said plurality of devices operate to perform a predetermined process, said predetermined process including changing of conditions of

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said operation.

13. A device employed in an inter-device cooperative control system in which a plurality of devices communicate with one another, said device comprising:

storage means for storing functional information including at least one of information on a function possessed by the device and information on a function to be performed on the device, environmental information on the environment in which the device is located, and status information which indicates the progress of at least one of a process performed by the device and a process performed on the device;

means for obtaining information on a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or information on a process to be performed on said plurality of devices; and

means for determining a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or a process to be performed on said plurality of devices based on information obtained by other devices and functional information, environmental information, and status information each possessed by the device.

14. The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein pieces of information obtained by the device are functional information, environmental information, and status information on said plurality of devices.

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15. The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein information obtained by said other devices is a request for a process to be performed by said plurality of devices or a process to be performed on said plurality of devices.

16. The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said environmental information includes position information indicating a position of a device.

17. The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said position information includes at least one of an absolute position of the device, a relative position of the device to another device, and a distance obtained based on a route which can be used by the device.

18. The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said plurality of devices operate to perform a predetermined process, said predetermined process including changing of conditions of said operation.

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